hearts and flowers

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/45385447.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Beverly Katz, Will Graham's Dogs, Bedelia Du Maurier
Additional Tags:	Friends to Lovers, Secret Admirer, Romance, Courtship, Will's bisexual awakening, Sugar Daddy Hannibal Lecter, Sexual Tension, Mutual Pining, Romantic Fluff, Emotional Hurt/Comfort, Smut, First Time, Happy Ending, Top Hannibal Lecter, Bottom Will Graham
Language:	English
Series:	Part 3 of Potential
Stats:	Published: 2023-02-28 Words: 8,788 Chapters: 1/1

hearts and flowers

by EarthsickWithoutYou

Summary

Here is a fic of 100% Hannigram comfort food for Valentine's Day. It is completely indulgent and has: secret admirer!Hannibal, tooth-rotting fluff, plenty of smut, Will having a vivid bisexual awakening, and murder husbands Valentine's traditions. Hope you enjoy this feast of happy, friends-to-lovers tropes! 💕❤️

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Then let it be a fairy tale

In the years to come, Hannibal would retell his side of their love story while he and Will lay in bed. Will was always content to listen to him talk, while joking that this was something they had in common (and it was a good thing for his ever-verbose and florid lover this was the case).

Will loved hearing the story over and over; after all, no one told a story like Hannibal, and it still made him blush to hear what had occurred "behind the scenes" – what Hannibal felt, thought and did before he and Will confessed their feelings.

"Tell me, one more time," Will would laugh softly, kicking Hannibal gently under the covers, snuggling up with his head on his lover's lightly furred chest. "The first Valentine's day we shared."

"One more, is it?" Hannibal chuckled, entangled their legs more firmly, and held Will close. "Very well, then, I can deny you nothing, my love.

Once upon a time, there lived a handsome king who didn't know he was lonely. He never found out until he seemed to go somewhat insane all of a sudden (though of course, this change wasn't entirely sudden; the King didn't know that yet).

It was quite odd that he should go mad, given that this King was normally cool and calm. He was respected, powerful, and even a beast in his chosen battle arenas. He was a force to be reckoned with, feared and admired, desired and adored. Yet until this day, the King could enjoy all of these privileges and many others, without feeling anything himself, outside of hearty self-admiration."

"So, you admit it," Will giggled, "At last."

Hannibal had a tendency to add new details and make the story a little longer, more thoughtful, and fancy each time he told it.

Now, he rolled his eyes, rubbing Will's back and kissing his forehead, never able to resist. "Do you wish to hear the story or not, Will?"

"Sorry. Please, continue."

"Thank you. *Although his hobbies usually included the more macabre pursuits such as hunting elusive, forbidden prey and making of them his own decadent artform, the King was taken by surprise on a previously ordinary-seeming, bleak February afternoon, as a new proclivity intruded upon his heart, apparently without any warning at all…*

He stopped while walking by a foolish little store all done up in pink and red hearts, absolutely tasteless, gaudy, and an unwarranted attack on the eyes.

If anyone had asked, during the time he spent perusing the store and then going up to the register with credit card in hand, he would not have been able to explain why he purchased

flowers, a teddy bear, chocolates and even a romantic card.

He remained bewildered but strangely motivated, even once he had paid for the items and returned outside to the grim, gray day with an unidentifiable, insistently giddy feeling in his heart that almost scared him.

He had bought such silly things and what's more, they weren't even the King's "style." He normally preferred color schemes to be gothic and such as would induce a pleasant dread: deep maroon, royal and bruise-like purple, the unknowable void of pure black, for example. But the flowers were a bright, vibrant, even cheerful red.

There were over a dozen perfect red roses surrounded by white baby's breath, in a glass vase tied in a gold ribbon.

It got worse. There was a plump, beige-colored stuffed bear with big brown eyes and a matching ribbon around his neck in a jaunty bow. He had one arm around the vase, hugging it, through a clever application of small plastic tabs on the part of the store workers.

Meanwhile, the bear, thankfully hidden along with the other shameful purchases, inside a brown shopping bag with cardboard structures to hold the vase still, had a box of chocolates in his other…paw. A gold box full of heart-shaped truffles, to be exact.

The card was perhaps even more obnoxious, especially since the King had bypassed a whole section of melodramatic ones with long, eloquent descriptions of passion both wild and committed.

Instead, he had chosen one with a cartoon image of a dog wearing glasses. This dog had a certain sort of innocently questioning demeanor that bore a strange thrum of familiarity. Numerous red cartoon hearts were floating above the head of the dog, along with "Happy Valentine's Day" in glossy red cursive.

When the King got home, unwound his scarf, took off his impressive, designer coat that usually made him feel regal and imposing, and set the silly things down on his dining room table, he finally realized who they were for.

Perhaps it was coming home, after all of these inexplicable preparations, and seeing how empty that house was. For some reason, the normally delightful solitude of the place made a sharp pang of longing turn painful in his heart.

He knew who the dog on the card reminded him of. But why in the name of all things evil, self-insulated and sane, had he done all this for Will Graham? Was he actually going to give the profiler any of these ridiculous tokens?

***

"Red is the color of passion," Bedelia Du Maurier noted when Hannibal had his weekly session with her the next day.

"You're implying I did all of this out of some…passion for Will Graham?"

“Is there really a question mark at the end of that sentence, Hannibal?” Bedelia asked, looking exhausted. “This is not the first time you’ve come to me, uncharacteristically enthused or out of sorts, declaring some conundrum or fascinating discovery, or both, all about Will Graham. I believe we agreed that you are obsessively intrigued, did we not?”

Hannibal shifted in his seat, suddenly uncomfortable. He tapped his fingers on the arms of his chair, watched a lazy drift of slow falling outside the window behind his therapist, and sighed.

Red *was* rather notoriously the color of passion…

“I try not to include romantic passions in my life. That would be inconvenient.”

“And as for sexual passions?” A glimmer came into her ice blue eyes, giving Hannibal the annoying feeling that she found the “soapier” side of his life a little too entertaining.

This had never bothered him, until the more exciting and personal parts of his existence became marked by serious, if repressed and reluctant, attachment.

“Yes, those are fine.” Hannibal sat more primly and rigidly.

He ought to use this as a chance to flirt in a threatening, yet deeply sensuous manner, with his lovely blonde colleague, and yet…he could do no such thing.

The ideas of passion and sex had somehow been *infiltrated* by Will Graham, so that for Hannibal, Will was now as attached to the concepts as Hannibal was apparently attached to the curly-haired FBI agent.

He elaborated coldly, “Sexual passions are well and good, especially in working out various unwanted stresses. And many of us have natural needs in that area where…to never indulge would be unhealthy. Yet this can easily be done on a regular basis without forming any suffocating… *relationships.*”

“I want to make sure my notes are accurate, so that I can be as helpful to you as I know how.” Bedelia smiled serenely, tucking a lock of glossy hair behind one ear, looking as polished as ever. “You’re saying that previous to this infatuation with Will Graham, you included sexual passion in your frequent pursuits because your body seemed to need sex, because it helped you to work out stress, and because you felt alright – that is to say, safe, emotionally – doing all of this, given that you never had feelings for your lovers?”

Hannibal nodded, keeping his tone tart. Keeping Bedelia on her toes.

“Will Graham is not my lover.” He glowered at her, a slight warning in the look.

They were entering into conversational territory which he had longed to unburden from his heart and simultaneously intended never to consider in any depth. Yet, confessions of the silly things he had purchased had spilled from his lips almost as soon as he sat down. Surely, in some way, it must be Bedelia’s fault. Now, he felt sick at heart, slightly disoriented, and not appreciative to her for these facts.

She must not get the idea of having the upper hand when *he* was not the one who had allowed himself to get caught practically in the act of murder. *He* was not the one who, for all their pretty traits, inward and exterior, was at the end of the day more of an entree than a friend or counselor.

“You either want my help or you don’t,” she insisted frostily.

Yet her eyes seemed warmer than usual. She asserted her own dignified strength while challenging him in about as heartfelt a manner as she was capable of exuding.

Tapping her pen on the small pad which sat on her lap over her smooth lavender skirt, she added, “I am either speaking with my patient or I am speaking with his person suit. Perhaps you had better decide which mode is more useful to your current quagmire, before we continue. I’m sure you would agree that is only fair and polite.”

Hannibal felt outwitted and angry about it, but there was no avoiding the fact of her correct conclusion. It was fruitless to have this discussion without deciding whether to be honest or deceptive, whether he wanted real therapy, or a teasing facade of it for his own entertainment.

“If I conclude that it would be more beneficial for me to discuss the matter openly with you,” Hannibal decided, “Then I think it is a good idea that we also open a bottle of *wine* mid-session, rather than waiting until the end.”

Naturally, Dr. Du Maurier was amenable. She might have preferred the suggestion to involve the handsome, dangerously enthralling Hannibal Lecter seducing her, but being able to show her superior understanding of his own mind and heart was almost as pleasurable. Few indeed were the persons who did that and lived, even to see another day.

A bottle of cabernet sauvignon later, Hannibal called for a taxi, since it had required him to become about 50% inebriated to allow certain feelings out for close discussion.

But doing so, having a real, honest session with Bedelia this time, perhaps a first – had opened him up to a better comprehension of the strange war going on in his heart. And he felt lighter, more excited than terrified. He had even concocted a plan as to what to do with the silly things, if not himself as yet.

***

Will wasn’t expecting Valentine’s gifts of any kind, and to Hannibal, somehow this made the bizarre lapse in his own prideful, self-protecting coldness irresistible.

He set the silly things outside the boy’s cozy Wolf Trap home, so early in the morning he was sure even Will would not be awake yet. Thankfully, he was correct; even for Will to see his car approaching would be extremely bizarre. He wasn’t in the habit of making professional or friendly visits at five a.m.; even Hannibal Lecter needed his beauty sleep.

But now, it was thoroughly worth getting up a bit earlier and even driving an hour through the snow to place the absolutely ridiculous gifts on the boy’s porch. Hannibal could only

imagine the humble, anxious agent's response when he opened the door, and wished it was safe to linger and try to get a glance.

Hannibal wasn't comfortable getting quite that close, yet. So he contented himself with fantasies of various reactions, picturing Will and everything else vividly, and found that the images made him feel that unaccountable, somewhat sickening giddiness again.

He could know nothing more until Will approached him on the subject, never suspecting him to be the secret admirer, and therefore Hannibal simply drove to his Baltimore office and began his sessions for the day. And acted as if he wasn't almost salivating for it to finally be 7:30pm, time for Will's appointment.

***

"*Fuck* Valentine's Day," Will grumbled as he ripped the "2/13" date sheet off his desk calendar on the kitchen counter and found himself aggressively confronted with "2/14."

"*Ugh,*" he added emphatically, ripping that page up as well, crumpling it violently in his fist and tossing it in the trash.

This day, after all, meant nothing to him and likely never would. He wasn't the kind of person anyone had for a Valentine, for God's sake.

His plans for the romantic occasion included going to work, where he would be absorbed in an upsetting, over-taxing case until evening came, and if he had done enough to solve the case, perhaps then he could go home at a decent hour to get some rest, if not relaxation.

There would be no dates, no presents and cards, no one to kiss and hold by some stereotypical, romantic fireplace. He hated all that bullshit, anyway. He didn't need it. He was fine.

"Disgusting," he muttered when he opened his phone screen, sitting at his little table and blowing on his mug of coffee.

There were all kinds of Valentine's Day ads in his email inbox, as if he needed reminders of this stupid day which he didn't care about in the least. He couldn't crumple his phone up or toss it in the garbage, so he settled for swearing at it, deleting the ads in a click-click-click massacre journey to the digital trash, and pretending this satisfied him. Pretending he was cynical, until he became it. But deep down, Will was still waiting for that particular and useful metamorphosis to truly occur.

He dressed for work in a bland and numb sort of mood that wasn't much better than the angry disgust, but none of it was cynical enough to be acceptable.

A plaid shirt, a sort-of matching tie, a pair of khakis, his glasses and briefcase, and he was ready to go. Another day for Will Graham. Nothing special, just like he was nothing sp–

Will nearly tripped over the bright and almost supernaturally cheerful assortment of gifts when he went quickly out his front door. He'd been looking forward to work, in a sense, just

to escape into someone else's mind for a while. Even a horrific, despicable killer's mind would be preferable to his own. But…

"What the hell is this?" Will looked down, stepping back, thankfully having avoided the fall forward that would have crushed some of the items.

"Must be some mistake," he muttered sadly, thinking how stupid it was that for a second there he assumed these presents were for him.

Who would they even be *from?* So idiotic of him, he was glad no one else would ever know he'd entertained the theory for a moment.

The closest neighbors were ten miles away, but he guessed the delivery must be for them, as there was no one else near enough to his own house to account for even an absent-minded driver mixing the addresses up.

However, he was glad that he had a chair out on the porch because when he saw the card more closely, he definitely needed to sit down.

The card, in its vibrant red envelope, said boldly, in black felt pen and pretty cursive, *'To Will.'*

Will could not have been more astonished if someone had punched him in the stomach. The feeling wasn't even dissimilar. He put a hand on his heart and grabbed the card with the other, leaning forward in the chair as his glasses almost slid off his nose. A sigh drifted from his chapped lips into the chilly air, making a little white puff of disbelief.

Tears sprang into his eyes, and he wondered why he felt so touched considering that he despised Valentine's Day and everything it stood for. Furthermore, there still had to be some way this was a mistake, a mix-up of…him and some other…*Will?*

But when he took the card out, examining it like a crime scene photo, there could be no doubt he was the intended recipient. The picture of the cute dog in glasses not only made him laugh in surprised delight, but it even sort of looked like a face he made when feeling curious (perhaps a little petulant, too).

Inside, there was a sweet, short poem about love, a really cheesy one, followed by no name, only *'xxxxxx'* in the same black felt pen ink. The same perfect, meticulous, flowing cursive.

"This makes no sense," he said, smiling anyway as he reached for the other items.

They were attached, but easy to take apart and examine individually like the evidence they were. The big arrangement of roses, which he knew were exorbitantly pricey, since on the rare occasions – not since college, actually – he'd had a girlfriend on Valentine's Day, he'd never been able to afford this type of thing and settled for colored carnations from the grocery store.

The chocolates were also a brand he recognized as "the best" and most expensive ones commonly available, luscious truffles imported from Europe. They came in a gold box

presented to him cheerfully by an actual teddy bear.

Even as a kid, Will had only owned one of these things, and it had long since been left behind at his dad's depressing little house down in Louisiana.

That old teddy bear reminded him of his lonely childhood, and when he left home for college he'd been foolish enough to think his adulthood would be much less lonely, envisioning a nice circle of friends and some blurry idea of a significant other to make it all complete. And *dogs,* of course, always dogs.

So getting this nice, fluffy, thoroughly huggable bear now when he'd been feeling – he now admitted to himself – a little downhearted about his perpetually single status…it held a meaning probably beyond what the generous giver had imagined.

He laughed, a tender, gentle sound he barely recognized, something pure without the usual stress or sarcasm.

But, as he admired his presents and kept looking at them for more clues (it was obviously best to both hug the bear a few times and eat several chocolates, to see if he discovered any evidence as to who might have left him these things), the mystery only deepened.

Will did not think he knew anyone who would feel this way about him, to go into an actual store and spend a large amount of money on this stuff and bring it all the way out to Wolf Trap at the crack of dawn. He definitely didn't know anyone whose taste veered this far into the "cute" department, either. So he continued to find the whole incident even weirder than his darkest murder case at work.

Still, he unlocked his door again to go in and display the gifts proudly on his little table, warning the dogs with a "click click" noise they knew very well meant 'leave this stuff alone.'

"I have no idea, Winston," he said thoughtfully, petting his dog's head when the pet gave an inquisitive bark.

The rest of the dogs looked equally baffled, then disappointed the new things brought into the house were neither toys nor food-oriented treats for them. As for Will, unlike his usually incisive analytical conclusions, he didn't even have a theory on the admirer's identity, and felt even more confused than the dogs.

***

Hannibal had not previously been aware that his taste in life veered quite so far into the "cute" department, but now he confessed to himself it had been otherwise from the moment he saw Will Graham for the first time in Jack Crawford's office.

The profiler was everything fascinating, luscious and desirable, he was deep and full of dark, violent secrets; he was sweet, kind and giving, too. Furthermore, Will was obviously the most beautiful creature on the planet and most likely the entire universe, even if there was copious life in other galaxies. There was no question that Hannibal's interest in the boy was almost

excessively sexual, but he'd done his best to funnel the instincts into a wicked scheme to "mess" with Will's mind with various attempts at psychic driving.

However, he never succeeded, even when he put Will unknowingly under hypnosis; the inspirations of murder which he suggested so capably to the boy evaporated as soon as he woke his patient with a subtle snap of his fingers. Will was too smart; he even outsmarted Hannibal when he was hypnotized. An unfairly impressive and deeply problematic trait.

Through all of this, and across many friendly, honestly caring conversations they had shared in his office, Hannibal realized belatedly he had a) been giving some actually helpful therapeutic advice to Will, and while most of it had at least been about nurturing his darker urges, b) he had fallen helplessly in love during the process.

It was not until that eventful February 13th that he realized it, and by then he had spent a hundred dollars on the sort of tacky gifts he would normally consider loathsome and embarrassingly sentimental.

"It is Valentine's Day," he observed with a warm smile as he and Will finally sat down across from one another in his office.

7:30 had arrived at last, but with it, Hannibal felt the "terror" returning, felt it overpowering the silly and annoying, but at least slightly more tolerable "giddy" sensation.

Will had never looked more beautiful to him, dressed in his usual drab attire, but with a rosy blush in his soft cheeks and a shy, different sort of smile.

The very sight of him, now that Hannibal (with a practically forgotten, minuscule bit of assistance from Bedelia) understood his own feelings, was excruciating, if he could not also touch, kiss and possess Will.

"Yes, it is," Will laughed.

"I confess, I had expected a cynical response on the subject, which would not have been far off from my own sentiments," Hannibal said with an answering chuckle.

"Up until this morning, you'd have been right. I definitely would have told you I hate this holiday which was invented by…"

In unison, they said, "The greeting card companies…" and laughed again.

"Yes," Will nodded, "But…this morning…believe it or not, I was leaving for work and discovered several genuinely lovely and thoughtful Valentine's presents on my porch. They were for me."

"Well, since they were on your porch…" Hannibal was slightly surprised. "Of course they must be for you, yes?"

"Not so much 'of course.'" Will shrugged. "I never got anything like this in my life, I never even got a box of conversation hearts from a classmate at school as a kid. You could have

knocked me over with a feather when I saw my name on the card…I thought, up till that moment, they must have been left at my house by mistake."

"So. It was no mistake," Hannibal said, disliking how strong the painful sensation was in his heart at hearing Will profess doubt of even being the intended recipient of presents on his own porch, on a holiday. "Who was the thoughtful gift-giver who disproved your theory of unworthiness and ruined your cynical mood?"

Will laughed in a more bittersweet way. "I guess you're right and may as well say it. I did think of myself as unworthy. And…this person did change my mood about the stupid holiday, but…they never revealed themselves. The card wasn't signed, it just had…uh…" He blushed redder. "Three kisses? Written on it."

Hannibal was glad he had the foresight to place all of his own written journals and papers under other, heavy items on his desk and in his drawers, and grateful that Will was unlikely to venture up to the second floor of his library area this evening to discover his bound patient notes from past years.

That would have revealed his rather recognizably superior handwriting, and the thought made Hannibal wonder if part of him hadn't wanted to be "caught" by Will as the secret admirer.

In order to fight off a blush that threatened to intrude into his own face, Hannibal asked "calmly," in his best therapeutic tone, "And how did that make you feel?"

Will gave him the short but open-hearted, genuine laugh again, little guessing how it tore his friend up inside and made Hannibal want him more than ever. Want to make him laugh like that again and again, and hear his moans…his screams…everything they might share…it was all too much.

He wanted Will drenched in blood, and he wanted the boy covered in sweat, trapped ecstatically beneath him in bed, and the fantasies were only getting more intense with time. There was no hope of "getting over" Will Graham.

"How did it make me feel," Will repeated, "Well, I guess…it made me feel…special."

***

The days that followed, if anything, just got even weirder for Will. As if encouraged by his acceptance of the Valentine's gifts, his admirer kept leaving him more presents all over the place, surprising Will, often when least expected. More items snuck onto his porch while he wasn't home, some gifts left in his classroom on the desk, or in the office space assigned to him in the Behavioral Science division.

There was a bottle of cologne, which smelled woodsy, with just a hint of vanilla, overall a comforting and pleasant scent. It was just so specifically Will. Whoever had done all of this didn't just *know* him…it was like they knew him inside out. The way he'd always wanted to be known, and never had been until now.

Now, when he didn't even know who to thank!

He couldn't deny, if only to himself, that he was completely infatuated with the unseen gift-giver. Beverly was convinced it had to be "someone hot" because she considered the presents "sexy" and "classy."

Will supposed it might have been a mistake to tell her about the pair of navy blue, designer silk pajamas which had arrived on day three…but she did have some good insight into the matter. He needed to consult on this with someone else in addition to Dr. Lecter, who was helpful, too, but didn't seem to have much in the way of a love life.

Beverly, on the other hand, dated frequently, and often complained or enthused to her friends at work on the subject of the latest romance in her life. Therefore, Will considered her a capable advisor, even if her comments made him turn red and want to hide.

"I can't know that for sure," he argued feebly, caressing the silk pajama top just one more time before replacing the lid on the gift box which had been left on his desk. "They might not even be someone I'm attracted to 'in real life.'"

"This *is* real life!" Beverly insisted, gesturing with one of the many chocolate truffles from Will's latest heart-shaped box. "Look at this stuff. This admirer gave you gourmet biscuits for your *dogs,* Graham. They gave you a can of coffee made from the rarest beans on the planet, which costs more than the monthly payment on my car."

"So, whoever it is, they're rich," Will nodded. "I mean, I guessed that much."

"Who knows you this well and is wealthy?" Beverly looked at the day's presents more closely and bit her lip. "What about Dr. Lecter? No, no, hear me out!"

She laughed at Will's instant "it couldn't be" reaction.

"Listen, Will. He knows you incredibly well. You two have become close, beyond just a client-therapist bond."

"That would be very unprofessional of him and naive of me," Will complained, blushing. "I can't imagine that's the case. We're friends, that's the furthest we've crossed the lines of–"

"Oh my god," Beverly groaned, "Are you kidding me? Look, inappropriate or not, true love doesn't come along every day."

"I did not take you for a believer in true love," Will sighed, rubbing his eyes under his glasses and leaning back in his chair, more confused than ever.

"Okay, look at it this way, I'll be more honest. *Sugar daddies* don't come along every day…"

"*Agent Katz!*" Will's cheeks turned scarlet and he actually jumped out of his chair with his finger held up in objection. "That is just – that is–"

"Yes?" Beverly asked smugly. "I'm convinced I'm right, the more I think about it."

"It's absurd," Will said with a sarcastic laugh that came out too high-pitched and frantic. "I'm not gay and Hannibal has never mentioned that he dates men, for example. I mean…he's

handsome, he's thoughtful, he's rich, but beyond that…"

"Hmm. First of all, you might want to rethink the exact notch where you land on the spectrum. It's worth considering, at least," Beverly advised.

She said this kindly, but the sparkle of amusement came back into her eyes and voice when she added, "And have you ever asked if he's interested in men?"

"For goodness' sake, Beverly," Will paced, rubbing his whole face this time, finding no relief in any nervous tic. "Why would I ask him that?"

His heart was beating awfully hard for someone thoroughly straight, and considering he'd never thought about Hannibal in this light before. Had…he?

"I've got a better question for you," she answered archly, "Why *don't* you?"

***

Will dismissed Beverly's theory, tried not to think about it, utterly failed, and soon discovered corroborating evidence.

"What's that?" he asked, a bit too eagerly in Jack's office, a week and many presents later.

"That?" Jack repeated nonchalantly. "Oh, some of Dr. Lecter's notes from the Shrike case. Dammit, if Bella knew how disorganized this office is…"

Jack sighed and explained about how Bella made "a place for everything and everything in its place" actually happen at their house and her own office, and he was jealous of the skill, but his top profiler was very distracted.

He saw Hannibal's handwriting. And it was his admirer's penmanship, exactly! After all of those envelopes that said 'To Will,' with the romantic cards signed '*xxxx,*' Will was familiar enough to recognize it instantly.

His heart was suddenly in his throat; in fact, he had to sit down. Luckily, his reputation for being "spacey" came in handy here; Jack didn't realize he was thinking about his love life and not anything to do with their current case.

Will realized that deep down, he had already come to believe Beverly's theory about Hannibal – after all, as more presents arrived, they started to seem like just the sort of thoughtful, but insistently luxurious things his therapist would select. And Hannibal seemed almost nervous at recent therapy sessions…Will was, too, he guessed they made quite the pair…

There had been expensive whiskey, more flowers (and more flowers after that), new dog collars for Will's pets, made of leather and featuring real gold tags that said their *names,* and on the same day, a slender, gold bracelet for Will.

The bracelet was elegant, subtle and classy, to use Bev's chosen adjective. In fact, like all of the other presents, it was simply perfect; each item was curated for *Will* and no one else but

Will.

He could easily turn up his sleeve wherever he was and admire the bracelet, considering its many implications, and no one else had to know.

Will had never received a present that was better than a vague afterthought in his whole life, and now he was getting spoiled on a daily basis, inundated with treasures that lit up his life. He always seemed to get just what he needed to cheer him up when work got stressful and the nights long as he wondered what was to come. The gifts felt incredibly intimate, and Will began finding them arousing.

There was a certain pattern, where Will noticed the presents were gradually becoming more and more sensuous and even more personal, culminating when he finally received a set of silk briefs, all of them in dark or earth toned colors, to Will's taste, nothing flashy, but even softer than the pjs.

He found them surprisingly comfortable, and also discovered that wearing them, like wearing the bracelet, made him feel very claimed. He smelled like the admirer chose that he should smell; he wore the shirt and tie he had received from the same mysterious person.

Everything marked him from head to toe, but the underwear, oh, God. By the time those arrived, he knew who sent them. And he knew that Hannibal being a man was not stopping him from reciprocating this attraction…in fact, quite the opposite, to his continued and very hot-blooded, nervous surprise.

***

Happily ever after

"*And then, one day, the King innocently arrived at his Prince's humble abode to leave another few beautiful gifts as proof of his –*"

"*Innocently?*" Will repeated, "You've never done anything innocently in your life."

"If you continue," Hannibal said, punctuating the statement with kisses on Will's eagerly offered mouth, "*Interrupting*…me…then…I…won't…be…"

"Able to tell the rest of the story, okay, okay," Will laughed. "How worried were you that I might not reciprocate your feelings? I hope by then you kind of guessed that I felt the same."

"I'm happy to illuminate the matter for you, if you will allow me," Hannibal smirked.

Will settled back down and covered his mouth, so Hannibal kissed his hand instead.

"Ahem. To continue…

The King was getting quite desperately nervous about his Prince's feelings – could the lovely boy return his love, or was it all in vain? He kept hoping for the best, and he had even been skipping his appointments with the court therapist, spending most of his time either thinking

of the Prince or buying him gifts. He still hunted by night, turning all of his victims into artistic homages to the same beautiful boy who had so bewitched him.

He was becoming a man of action on the matter of his Prince, which meant the situation was bound to come to a head soon. And this proved true…"

***

Will got up extra early, with a funny feeling as if he was about to catch the Easter Bunny; the scenario wasn't all that different, really. Both his "secret" admirer and the fluffy character with the long ears were known to arrive in the very early hours and leave treats at people's houses.

Trying not to laugh too hard at these thoughts, Will crept to his front window, the curtains left open just a slit, his house totally dark so that it appeared he must still be asleep, not even having taken the dogs out for their morning frolic yet.

And sure enough, like clockwork, Hannibal Lecter appeared, looking extremely pleased with himself (even more than usual) and carrying several elaborately wrapped presents.

Will instantly drew back and sat on the floor with his back against the wall, silently screaming into his hand.

***

Hannibal began receiving gifts from a mystery admirer of his own, starting the very next day. The presents were incredibly thoughtful, from a bottle of fine red wine to tickets for the opera and a book of love poetry which Hannibal found especially romantic.

There were cards, too, and inside them the signature, '*oooooo.*'

Hannibal laughed shakily and relaxed down to his bones. Will knew all about his activities as an admirer, and had chosen to reciprocate. He felt so lucky…until the next fear intruded.

Would Will accept Hannibal even when he learned of his identity as the Ripper?

He decided, while they were still conversing on the subject of their love through gifts and cards, to use the opportunity to his advantage. Namely, it allowed him to unveil his murderous nature while not feeling as intimidated as he would in the same room with Will, and having those big blue eyes on him while he confessed.

So, he clipped out several news stories from the papers and magazines recounting his wicked, brutal deeds, glued them into a neat collage, and added to his '*xxxxxxx,' 'all for you.*'

Will stared at this message when it arrived on his doorstep, accompanied by a gorgeous assortment of fresh fruit and new glasses with his correct prescription (how did Hannibal figure it out?) and designer frames.

All of the Ripper crime photos enclosed featured tableaus that were deliberately, gruesomely romantic. Will now understood what had been baffling and intriguing him for weeks: the

identity of the person who had the Ripper feeling obsessively in love, so that the passion spilled out all over his murders and art.

He sat with the knowledge for a full day, even taking it off from work. And by the time he went to bed, he knew that while it meant he was insane and wrong, he was in love with Hannibal in *every* way.

Will even let himself, finally, admit that he had always been enamored and admiring of the Ripper's unique form of art.

The next evening, Will received a heart-shaped Tupperware in an insulated lunch bag. Inside, there was a human heart which had apparently been cooked to perfection, medium rare. It had been lightly sauteed in a garlic butter sauce with herbs.

The juices flowed into the side dishes of sauteed spinach and whipped potatoes, everything perfect. Only one chef could have prepared such a meal.

Will had a lump in his throat as he carried the meal inside and placed it reverently on his table. He now understood more fully the fate of a certain fellow FBI agent who had occasionally harassed him for his "crazy" behavior and questioned his professionalism. The man had been discovered dead in his office that morning, made into a mocking tableau with his badge taking the place of his missing heart.

The tears in his eyes were not revulsion, and the fluttering in his belly was not fear or nausea. No, it was all…excited gratitude. That, and such hunger. Will had never felt so hungry before, nor enjoyed a meal so much.

***

Hannibal was better than merely relieved when he finally received Will's "reply" to his gift of the dead agent's heart.

Two days of silence on Will's end towards the "admirer" had rendered him anxious once again, but the boy answered him in such an exquisite manner that it was all worth it. More than worth it.

A human heart, that of a cruel killer of innocents who had nonetheless been found "not guilty" in court, was left on his doorstep, packed with ice inside a cooler, with a card on top. '*I don't know how to cook this, but you could teach me. A cooking date soon? I'll be home every night this week, waiting. Xxxxx oooooo.*'

***

"You know," Hannibal said with a tense smile and his heart in his throat when he arrived at Will's house that evening, the bottle of wine from his admirer in one hand, the cooler in the other, his own heart on his sleeve.

"Yes, I know," Will repeated, in an agitation of affection and desire he could never have described, but could certainly express to his therapist physically.

“And I’m ready to talk about it,” Will added, raking his eyes in restless lust over Hannibal’s strong body in his elegant suit, which fit him exactly and hugged all of his best features. “Please come in.”

“Talk,” Hannibal repeated, walking into the profiler’s house and looking all around.

There was no surprise group of armed agents waiting to pounce on him with an arrest. Instead, the table was set for dinner, two wine glasses and all. Various pots, pans, knives and spoons had been neatly left out on the kitchen counter so they could cook together.

Hannibal took another look at Will’s expression and said, “I think I had better put the meat in the refrigerator for now.”

“You’d better,” Will nodded.

He was freshly showered and barefoot in jeans and one of the nice cashmere sweaters Hannibal had sent him. It had a low v neckline and he wore nothing beneath it, showing off his neck and chest. Of course, he also had on his bracelet, shining in the lowlights of some candles he had lit around the house.

Hannibal drank the sight of him in, like he was gazing at something much more decadent and enticing than the red wine, which he set down distractedly on the nearest surface.

“With so much to discuss,” Hannibal said almost breathlessly, “I have a few ideas of where we might start.”

“Me, too,” Will grinned, his eyes full of happy tears.

He rushed to Hannibal and Hannibal walked to him quickly, so that they sort of collided and started kissing feverishly before another word could be said.

Hannibal tasted like mint, but his mouth was hot despite the cool flavor, and he kissed Will as if it was what he wanted most in the whole world.

His arms wound tightly around the profiler and he simply smothered him in countless tender but rough and increasingly demanding kisses. He cradled Will’s face, intent on making the kisses as deep as possible, tasting Will and moaning into his mouth.

Will was dizzy, clinging to Hannibal’s suit jacket at one point, tugging his soft, silver-strewn hair at another, letting out breathy gasps just to have Hannibal kiss them away.

“Dr. Lecter,” Will said, apparently laughing and crying at the same time, only realizing it at that moment, as Hannibal started kissing his neck, yanking one side of his sweater right down to his shoulder for the purpose.

The reason for his purchase of the finely made, but revealing attire was even more obvious than before.

“You feel so good on my skin,” Will moaned, feeling sweaty and as if his heart was going to explode from beating much too fast. And as if he never wanted this to end.

“You accept all that you’ve learned about me…and what I do,” Hannibal said, licking all the way from Will’s neck down to his shoulder and then biting him in the sensitive spot where they met, right before he started licking and sucking at Will’s skin.

Will felt like he was going to be eaten alive, and yet he completely trusted the vicious cannibal to devour him only in the most romantic and sexual terms.

He knew Hannibal needed him, needed him far past skin and bones, down to the very center of his being where they would always be together. But Hannibal, no matter how he hungered for Will, would never risk losing him.

Will was treasure; both an impressively promising protege and the owner of Hannibal’s heart, the personification of his earthly desires. Will was to be nurtured, loved and protected by his possessive beast, never to be harmed.

He would consume Will on a near-constant basis, in the most intimate and life-changing way imaginable for them both.

Will felt faint. He felt passion such as he had never fathomed.

“I do accept you…” Will sealed their lips together and licked into Hannibal’s mouth, undoing his vest and then throwing it off, the jacket peeled haphazardly off at the same time. “I want you even more, knowing who and what you are…I want the real you, *all* of you.”

Hannibal’s eyes devoured Will, dark and evil, full of adoration, full of a need to possess that would have scared anyone else, but made Will elated.

“As I want you.” Hannibal undressed Will just as restlessly.

It seemed really fast to make love on their first official date, but hadn’t they already been a couple for about two months now, since the secret admirer gifts began?

Will wouldn’t have cared, even if their impetuous sex was the most taboo thing in the world. It was scandalous, loving a monster who helped him see and comfortably become the monster within himself.

He couldn’t do anything but succumb to the fire as it enveloped him, pleasure flooding his senses with every touch, kiss, and grope from firm, big hands that knew how to give exquisite pleasure.

It took finally knowing what he wanted to set Will free.

“Oh, God,” Will said, watching in a kind of daze as Hannibal, smiling in deeply mischievous desire, undid his belt, then his pants’ button and zipper. “I didn’t know I was this gay.”

He laughed, finding the feeling very, very liberating, while in the arms of the Chesapeake Ripper, who could pull him to pieces at any moment. The danger was wildly arousing and evoked total honesty from Will.

Hannibal smirked, shoved Will's trousers down and waited, breathing hard, as the younger man stepped out of them, all wobbly with nerves and excitement.

"I think you are bisexual, Will," Hannibal informed him, amused and aroused at the same time.

He was huge; Will could not believe how big, as Hannibal took down his own trousers and the profiler got a good look at the enormously hard cock tenting his tight black, silky briefs. He had given Will even skimpier versions of this type of undergarment, now on show, too, as they stared in wanton fascination. Hannibal fell to his knees at the sight of Will's erection, pressed urgently to his smooth blue underwear, and he started kissing the thick line of Will's cock through the soft fabric.

The pleasure was immediately so profound that Will was sure he would faint if Hannibal put his mouth right on his skin, his most private, erotic–

"I think you're bisexual, too," Will moaned as Hannibal slipped his underwear down with a groan of heated approval at what he saw.

Hannibal stared at Will's cock as it jutted out, dripping with need. He licked his lips and answered, "Yes, I've been aware of that for many years."

He kissed Will's thighs, gripping and groping them, sliding his open palm to Will's ass and just caressing as his kisses started moving closer to where they were desperately needed.

"Please don't tell me it was completely obvious that I was bisexual, and I never noticed until this started," Will said between helpless moans.

He put his hand in Hannibal's hair and gripped the silky strands as his legs threatened to give out. Everything the older man did felt better than he knew sex could be, and this was only the foreplay…

Later, he would know this was only the beginning of what would be *hours* of foreplay.

"No, it wasn't that obvious," Hannibal admitted huskily.

He kissed the head of Will's cock and gave it a longing, teasing lick. "But I was hopeful."

"Oh, Jesus fucking Christ," Will cried as his lover enveloped him in his hot, expertly savoring mouth, bobbing his head devotedly.

Hannibal sucked Will so well that Will felt he was going to come a few seconds after it started. Pleasure seared through him, the hot white surge of it so powerful, he was shocked when he was able to endure this onslaught for a few minutes.

He was even more shocked at Hannibal's nonstop, insistent and skillful passion, how the act aroused his lover equally and how the taste and feel of Will's most intimate self had him wild with passion. This was not foreplay from a partner who was hurrying through it to get to their own pleasure, which was the only form Will had received in the past.

In fact, Hannibal was content to wait for his own pleasure for what seemed like forever, taking his time and nearly the whole night discovering every single sensitive place on Will's body and then revisiting them obsessively, covering him in countless kisses, licks, bites and caresses, giving him so many orgasms Will almost begged him to stop. But then again…

Hannibal was fine waiting to be sucked off or to be inside his lover, despite his aching, painful longing for all of the above that was etched all over his face and came out in his moans and gasps while pleasuring Will, it seemed, to death. And back to life, again and again.

But he was unhinged in his passion. He'd used the bed to lay Will down and lick delightedly at his entrance, then finger him until Will almost screamed with blissful sensations that were completely new. Then, once Hannibal finally determined, smirking and panting, Will was ready, they fucked all over the entire house. And Will was glad he had dropped the dogs off to be watched by Alana at her place for the night.

They needed the house to themselves for this. It was a miracle they didn't knock over a candle and burn the place down. But on the other hand, Hannibal wasn't going to let anything get in his way at this point.

After Will moved in with Hannibal, lack of space due to the seven dogs became a non-issue, of course.

Will was slammed against the wall with his legs around Hannibal's waist, hands clinging desperately around his lover's neck as the older man split him in two on his thick cock, and then he was fucked on the floor until he came with a broken whimper, orgasm four. And his second prostate orgasm. He was reeling, delirious, and Hannibal loved it, loved Will.

He'd fuck Will until neither of them could move, and said so, too, in a gritty voice, biting Will's earlobe, pulling his hair, taking him in doggy position over the kitchen table. Then eating him out on the table top before throwing Will's legs right over his shoulders and fucking him even harder.

Hannibal was the very definition of a sexy beast with his powerful, rugged body and his elegant handsomeness; how the two qualities combined in his lover made Will quiver at the sight of him, naked and laying claim on him. Now Hannibal had Will, and he'd never let go.

Neither would Will.

***

"*And so, the King, who possessed a sexual prowess that was equally impressive as his intellect and –*"

"Seriously?" Will swatted him, then kissed his lips playfully.

"Am I wrong?" Hannibal sighed, playing with Will's hair.

He ran his fingertip up and down Will's spine, and every single place he touched felt electric to the younger man.

That had never changed, even several years after that first Valentine's Day.

"You're not, that's the worst part. So, what did Mr. Sexual Healing do to the Prince then?" Will smirked and raised his eyebrows, trailing languorous fingers through Hannibal's chest hair, feeling the older man's warm skin and the beating of his heart.

"*The King made love to the Prince fiercely, on that night and every night to follow. They were insatiable for one another in every way, and there was so very much they could share. Every Valentine's Day, they gave each other the heart of a recent enemy and had a special dinner, followed by a wild sex marathon.*"

"'Wild sex marathon' isn't exactly fairy tale language," Will snorted a laugh.

Hannibal ruffled his hair, this time finishing his thought despite the interruption. He found every one of those times Will burst into the story to be adorable and endearing. No one else was allowed to be rude, but Will could do almost anything he wanted and leave Hannibal staring at him, lovestruck as ever.

"In any case, *they traveled together whenever they pleased, for the King had vast wealth and loved nothing so much as spoiling his sweet, if highly mischievous boy. On the most recent Valentine's Day, the King gave his Prince another special present, perhaps the most special one of all, though that was hard to decide. It was a stunning engagement ring with a ruby surrounded by small black diamonds. It looked more beautiful on the Prince's hand than the King had expected – and he had expected it to look exceedingly beautiful.*"

Will lay back and examined his hand, nodding with another delighted grin. "It looks pretty damn good. But mostly because it says I'm yours forever, and I'll get to call you my husband."

"It's mostly because you're beautiful," Hannibal argued cheerfully. "But I like those other parts as well."

He hovered above Will, tracing his lips until Will opened to him and sucked his finger.

"Is it time for the *wild sex marathon* to resume?" Will asked when Hannibal was done slowly sliding his finger in and out of those plush, kiss-reddened lips.

Hannibal's darkening, almost menacing gaze left no question on the subject, but Will loved stoking that fire.

"Of course it is, darling."

"Happy Valentine's Day, fiance," Will smiled.

Then Hannibal and Will got back to the festivities with all due haste.

End Notes

Thanks for reading! 💐💕

***

Find me on social media!
Tumblr: some-sick-deja-vu (hannigram sideblog), earthsickwithoutyou (main)
Twitter: @earthsickwoyou

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!